

**EM SSAB CHAIRS**  
**Bi-Monthly Conference Call**  
**June 6, 2012**

**Participants**

<i>Board</i>	<i>Chairs/Representatives</i>	<i>Site Support Staff</i>
Hanford	Susan Leckband, Shelley Cimon	Sharon Braswell, Dana Bryson, Tiffany Nguyen
Idaho	Willie Preacher	
Nevada	Kathleen Bienenstein	Kelly Snyder, Denise Rupp
Northern New Mexico	Ralph Phelps, Carlos Valdez	Ed Worth, Menice Santistevan,
Oak Ridge	Maggie Owen	Spencer Gross
Paducah	Ralph Young, Buz Smith	Eric Roberts
Portsmouth		Julie Galloway, Rick Greene
Savannah River	Don Bridges	Bill Taylor, Terry Spears

**DOE-HQ Representatives**

EM-3.2	Catherine Alexander, Melissa Nielson, Michelle Hudson, Elizabeth Schmitt, Elizabeth Maksymonko
EM-60	Connie Flohr

**Opening Remarks**

Ms. Catherine Alexander, Designated Federal Officer for the Environmental Management Site-Specific Advisory Board (EM SSAB), called the meeting to order.

**Budget Update**

Ms. Connie Flohr, EM Budget Director, provided a status update on the proposed Fiscal Year (FY) 2013 budget as well as the process for the FY 2014 budget request. Documents containing information on the FY 2013 budget request may be found at <http://www.em.doe.gov/Pages/budgetdocs.aspx>.

Ms. Flohr explained that for FY 2013, the House's proposed budget level is \$5.544 billion, which is \$105.9 million below the initial EM request of \$5.650 billion. The Senate's proposed level is \$5.734 billion, which represents an \$85 million increase in funding.

The House appropriations bill is currently being considered on the floor with some amendments being added, and Ms. Flohr stated that she expects a final passage of the bill soon. She added that she would let the EM SSAB know when the Senate appropriations bill will go to the floor as soon as she is made aware.

Mr. Carlos Valdez, Vice Chair of the Northern New Mexico Citizens Advisory Board (NNMCAB) asked if Congress would operate under a Continuing Resolution (CR) for the beginning of FY 2013.

Ms. Flohr explained that more than likely, a CR would be enacted through January, and could be extended even longer because of the election-oriented political environment. EM is preparing for at least a four-month CR. [Note: Subsequently, EM has modified our strategy and are now assuming a six-month CR.] The CR would be enacted at about the approximately \$5.5 billion level, but, because of the possible sequestration requirements established by the Budget Control Act, EM could receive funding below that level. If no agreement is reached on the Hill, the sequestration will trigger automatic budget reductions on January 2, 2013, for all federal agencies. Ms. Flohr explained that when the CR begins, the DOE Chief Financial Officer (CFO) will intentionally set aside additional holdbacks in the first two to three months of the fiscal year until it becomes clear how the sequestration will affect EM.

Dr. Don Bridges, Chair of the Savannah River Site CAB (SRS CAB), asked if a funding level of \$5.5 billion would be particularly difficult for EM operations.

Ms. Flohr stated that there were concerns in EM that the level could have been less than the \$5.5 billion level, so she viewed the anticipated budget as positive for the program.

Ms. Flohr noted that FY 2014 budget planning has begun, and EM has started collecting information on the Integrated Priority List (IPL). EM-60 already has asked the sites to revise some IPL-related issues, and DOE Headquarters (HQ) is currently reviewing this information in-depth with a focus specifically on compliance.

Ms. Flohr also explained that on June 14, the Deputy Resources Board will convene to deliberate on budget information delivered to the CFO on June 8. In preparation for the meeting, Mr. David Huizenga and Mr. Tom D'Agostino were to be briefed.

Following discussions with the CFO, the budget recommendations should be sent to the Secretary on June 28. The final decision from Secretary Chu on these recommendations is expected on July 23. [Note: As of 7/31/12, no decisions have been received from the Secretary.] The EM budget submission to the Office of Management and Budget is due on September 10.

Ms. Flohr added that work on both the FY 2013 and 2014 budgets have been particularly interesting and challenging with involvement of the newly-formed Mission Units who have not been part of the EM budget reviews in the past. While training people will be challenging, this should create a more transparent budget formulation process and a stronger budget request.

### Discussion

Dr. Bridges stated that he had heard rumors of project overruns at SRS and wondered if it was likely that the project work would cut into the operations money.

Ms. Flohr explained that it is not EM's intention to cut into those funds. She added that if any adjustments are needed in the future, efforts will be made to minimize the negative impacts by adjusting the budget.

### **Spring Chairs' Meeting Follow-Up**

Ms. Alexander reported on local board votes on the recommendation passed at the Spring Chairs' meeting regarding continued funding for public participation, including the EM SSAB. The NNM CAB, Oak Ridge SSAB (ORSSAB), Portsmouth (Ports) SSAB, Nevada SSAB (NSSAB), and Paducah CAB, approved the recommendation at their respective meetings. Members of the Hanford Advisory Board (HAB) and Idaho National Laboratory CAB (INL CAB) both stated that they would vote on the recommendation during their next board meeting. Dr. Bridges asked for the recommendation to be sent electronically again; the SRS CAB would vote on the recommendation once he received the document.

The second recommendation created at the Chairs' meeting, on the topic of budget, had not yet been finalized. Ms. Alexander explained that one issue that the working group was addressing was that the recommendation asked for cuts to occur proportionally across sites, which brought up a concern of how to adequately address risk assessment.

Mr. Ed Juarez from the ORSSAB, Mr. Valdez, and Ms. Cristy Renner of the Ports SSAB comprise the working group for the second recommendation. However, it was explained that Mr. Juarez would be departing from the ORSSAB shortly, and Ms. Renner was on extended leave. Mr. Dick Snyder, Chair of the Ports SSAB, has volunteered to take the place of Ms. Renner, and Mr. Valdez will stay on the working group.

### **Fall Chairs' Meeting**

Ms. Alexander reminded the board members that the next EM SSAB Chairs' meeting will take place in Washington, DC, at DOE-HQ on October 2-3, 2012.

Ms. Alexander then asked for comments on the evaluations from the Spring Chairs' meeting, which was sent to board members and employees via e-mail.

Dr. Bridges and Ms. Susan Leckband of the HAB expressed their approval of the meeting in general and of the arrangements. Ms. Leckband added that she believed that Eric Roberts facilitated the meeting very well.

Ms. Alexander also noted that the Round Robin portion of the meeting received both positive and negative feedback. Some participants indicated they want more input and idea formulation prior to meeting; others thought Mr. Huizenga should be available for the cross-cutting issues. Ms. Alexander added that she was not sure if this meant participants believed his attendance at the cross-cutting portion was more important than the site-specific Round Robin.

Dr. Bridges stated that he believed that the five-minute limit was appropriate for the Round Robins because it provided a reasonable amount of time for site updates.

Ms. Leckband said that she did not believe there was a difference in importance between the two Round Robins but wanted as much time as possible with Mr. Huizenga.

Ms. Alexander stated that DOE-HQ would work to send the Round Robin issues out as early as possible, but added that she would need the sites to submit their issues early as well. This would create a way to provide additional info to Mr. Huizenga before the Chairs' meeting.

Volunteers for the Fall Chairs' meeting planning committee included Ms. Kathy Bienenstein (NSSAB), Mr. Ralph Young (Paducah CAB), Ms. Leckband (HAB), Ms. Tiffany Nguyen (HAB), and Ms. Shelley Cimon (HAB). The group will draft an agenda and identify priority topics for presenters. Ms. Alexander also asked everyone involved to look for topics for recommendations so discussion at the meeting.

Ms. Alexander stated that the committee will set up a call in the near future to start planning and that she will let everyone know when the date is decided upon.

## **Around the Complex**

### Idaho National Laboratory EM CAB – Willie Preacher

- During the last board meeting, the members took a tour of the INL, which helped educate new members on the cultural and historic resources that exist at the site. The second day included a tour of the INL cleanup project, which should help educate new members so they can comfortably participate in future discussions on the topic.
- The Environmental Management Advisory Board (EMAB) public meeting was held in Idaho Falls on May 31. Mr. Preacher created a presentation on the INL and the CAB for the meeting and received very positive feedback from EMAB members.

### Paducah CAB – Ralph Young

- Discussion of future site use at the Spring Chairs' meeting served as a catalyst for a meeting in Paducah concerning research into possible future use of that site. During a meeting of civic leaders in the Paducah/Western Kentucky area, speakers discussed transferring the responsibility for future use visions from DOE to the area's economic development organizations. Some believe that these organizations will be held more accountable to the community because of their local roots.

### Portsmouth SSAB – Rick Greene

- The board is nearing a decision on a possible onsite waste disposal cell, after many months of research and deliberation.
- Mr. Greene noted that the Ports SSAB is encountering similar issues as the Paducah CAB with regard to future site reuse, so there could be lessons learned from Paducah's experience.

### Hanford Advisory Board – Susan Leckband

- The HAB issued four pieces of advice including one that will address the 300 Area Remedial Investigation Feasibility Study and Proposed Plan, which will be a precursor to final Records of Decision. The advice may be found [here](#) on the HAB website.
- The board is considering draft advice for the final Waste Management Environmental Impact Statement, which has been many years in the making.

- The HAB has been preparing advice regarding the Waste Treatment Plant safety culture. This advice should be officially issued in the near future.
- Lastly, the HAB supported public meetings for the Hanford site-wide Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) permit. This a very important document because it will be the official operating permit for the entire site.

#### Savannah River Site CAB – Don Bridges

- In May, SRS CAB members toured the Emergency Operations Center at the Savannah River National Laboratory. Members of the board have also been attending regular Environmental Justice (EJ) meetings; these meetings provide a forum for understanding individual concerns about the site.
- Mr. Terry Spears was recently appointed as the new co-Deputy Designated Federal Officer for the SRS CAB.

Ms. Alexander inquired as to how the aforementioned EJ forums are structured.

Dr. Bridges explained that the presenters choose certain topics of interest and give an update on important issues related to those topics; examples include radon in water around the site and a variety of site activities. The meetings focused on the EJ program at SRS that works to provide jobs for the disadvantaged in communities surrounding the site. The meetings were facilitated by an organization that is separate from SRS.

#### Northern New Mexico CAB – Ralph Phelps

- The NNM CAB held its public meeting in a workshop format on May 30. This provided an opportunity for new members to receive a general overview of site activities.
- A site tour of the Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) was conducted for new members and included a tour of Technical Area-54, where the transuranic (TRU) waste is stored.
- The NNM CAB is planning a trip to Sandia Laboratory and Rocky Flats to study land reuse activities.
- The NNM CAB approved a letter that was drafted to Mr. Huizenga on his question at the Spring Chairs' meeting about whether the NNM CAB had taken any official position on the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP). The NNM CAB has taken no specific position, but would support using the plant for waste storage if it is properly justified.

Dr. Bridges asked for a copy of the letter concerning WIPP. Ms. Menice Santistevan of the NNM CAB stated that she would send it via e-mail to all of the local boards.

#### Oak Ridge SSAB – Maggie Owen

- In June, the ORSSAB will lose five current members and gain seven new members. Two new student representatives were seated on the board in May to replace the two who had completed their one-year terms of service ending in April.
- The board is in the process of planning the annual meeting in August, while also working on the summer edition of its newsletter, *The Advocate*.

- Five members traveled to Nevada to tour the Nevada National Security Site and to WIPP in New Mexico; the members found the tours to be very educational since so much of Oak Ridge's waste is sent to these sites.

#### Nevada SSAB – Kathy Bienenstein

- At the May NSSAB meeting, the board made a few recommendations to DOE, one of which concerned membership on the Nevada SSAB. The board interviewed potential NSSAB members and put the applicants into four categories, which included a ranking for their preferences.
- The NSSAB also issued a recommendation on ground water remediation alternatives. For now, the board will continue with current the policy and procedures and revisit the issue as more information on groundwater in and around the site becomes available.

Ms. Alexander noted that member appointment is an agency responsibility and that although some sites invite board involvement in reviewing applicants, DOE is required to ensure balance and diversity on the board. She noted that some boards have conducted their reviews as if membership applicants were professional job applicants, emphasizing education and experience in the area of nuclear and/or environmental matters; neither education nor experience is a requirement for membership on the EMSSAB. She asked Ms. Bienenstein to explain how the board approached this selection process.

Ms. Bienenstein stated that the NSSAB did struggle with diversity issues, but focused mostly on the applicant's ability to work well with others rather than factors such as education. The board also did not recommend applicants who wanted to join the board to influence decisions on issues that were outside the NSSAB's scope, such as issues concerning Yucca Mountain.

#### **Closing Remarks**

The next Chairs' conference call was scheduled for August 15, 2012, at 3:00 pm EDT.

Ms. Alexander thanked the participants for their time and adjourned the meeting at 4:00 pm EDT.